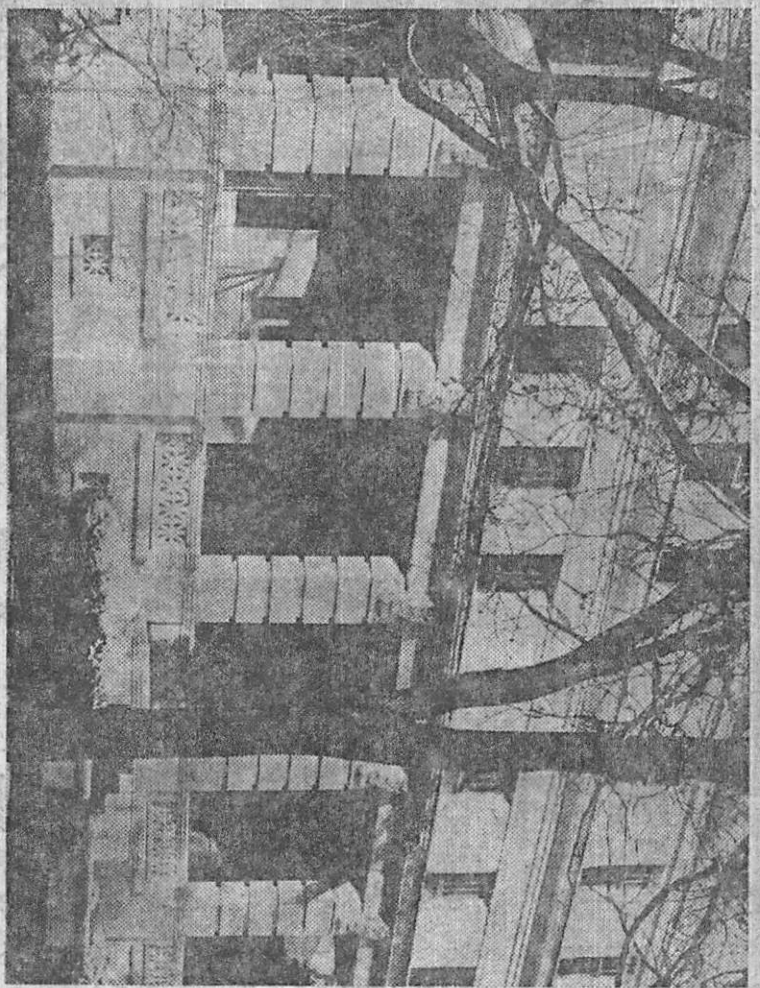


Junious Gordon examines one of the earliest dial telephones which is displayed at museum.



Once a dormitory-library for electrical engineering students, this building now houses museum and plant worker apartments.

Spark Of History At Olmsted

Des. News 10 Jan 1968

By LEO PERRY

Deseret News Staff Writer

PROVO — Some of Utah's early electrical relics are part of the display at a little-known Olmsted's museum at the mouth of Provo Canyon near here.

Old time light bulbs, early electric appliances, and some of the first electrical equipment manufactured are among the scores of items on display at the Olmstead Plant Museum, a building maintained by Utah Power and Light Company.

DRAW ATTENTION

Some of the items which annually draw attention include automatic telephone equipment, one of the earliest dial systems; volt meters, used in early experiments in Colorado and Utah; one of the earliest electric powered washers, early electric ranges and pioneer electrical equipment.

The museum caters to anyone who wants to inspect the relics but reservations should be made in advance so that a guide can be arranged, according to Conder Smoot, superintendent.

PRIME INTEREST

Of special interest in the museum are several books from P. N. Nunn's library including a copy of the third edition of "Alternating Current Phenomena" by Steinmetz.



Mr. Gordon and Emmett Miller, both plant employees check agitator on old-time hand operated washing machine with cedar-stave tub.

L. L. Nunn was the originator of Olmsted. He built the first dam in Provo Canyon in 1897, and later came the power plant named Nunn's

Provo Station. Power from the plant provided electrical power for the mines and mills in the Mecur-Eureka-Provo area and the first 40,000 volt

line in the world went into operation.

The plant at the mouth of Provo Canyon was construct-

ed by Mr. Nunn in 1903 and was named Olmsted after one of the engineers.

But there was a shortage of electrical engineers to run the power plant. So Mr. Nunn, aided by his brother, P. N. Nunn, organized the Telluride Institute in 1903, where eager young men went to school and learned about the new science of electricity.

Officials said as many as 40 students were enrolled at one time to study electricity in the classroom and on the job at the institute. The instruction continued until 1912, when Olmsted was acquired by Utah Power and Light. By this time, universities and colleges were offering electrical engineering in their courses.

Junious Gordon, chief operator at Olmsted, said the museum is especially popular with electrical engineering students at Brigham Young University.

"When they inspect this early electrical equipment they recognize the relics are the forebears of today's ultra-modern, automatic electrical equipment," he said.

The first unit of a modern electrical steam plant was built a short distance west of the Olmsted Plant in 1936. Another product unit was added at the plant later.

Provo River To Oquirrh— First U.S. Long Power Line



Some of the Nunn boys were alerted in their nightshirts for emergency.

By Dorothy O. Rea
Deseret News Staff Writer

The first long distance, high tension electric transmission line in America stretched from Provo River, across Utah Lake and up the Oquirrh Mountains to the highrise mining town of Mercur.

It was 1897 when L. L. Nunn, an electric power engineer, designed and built the line. So remarkable was the accomplishment that Nunn and his brother, Paul N., were chosen to design and construct the famous Niagara Falls electric plant in 1904.

The trail of water-powered electric plants across the Mountain West was first envisioned by the Nunn brothers and their Telluride Power Co. By 1904, the company and its allied industries had six power stations and nearly 1,000 miles of line in Colorado, Utah and Montana.

IDAHO PLANT

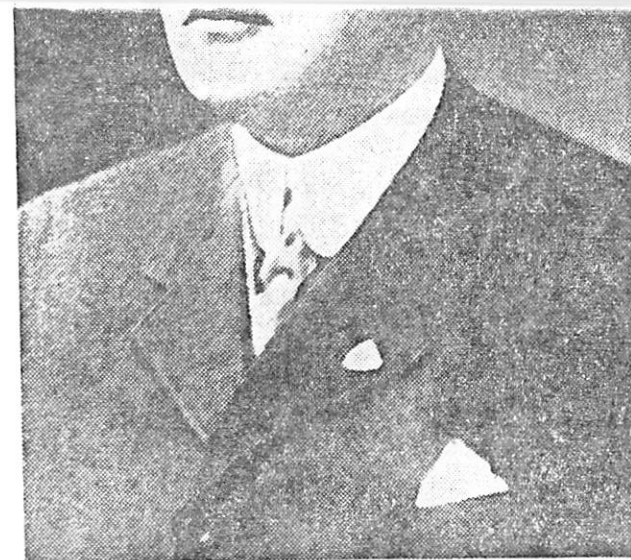
L. L. Nunn acquired from the federal government the right to use Bear Lake as a reservoir and built the power plant at Grace, Idaho. He organized the Beaver River

Power Company and built its two plants on the Beaver River in Southern Utah plus one on the Malad River in Idaho.

Of the historically famous experience at Provo, L. L. Nunn wrote, "Assured by the success of the original plant (in Colorado) we began as early as 1894 to seek for larger water-power sites and larger markets in the West. After long investigation, we decided to appropriate the waters of Provo River in Provo Canyon, Utah County.

TO MINE TOWNS

"Here we installed a temporary plant of 2,500 horsepower, under 125 feet head, transmitting current under 40,000 volts pressure to the De La Mar Golden Gate properties at Mercur, 35 miles distant . . . And later to Eure-



Paul Nunn . . . with brother made history in Utah.

ka, Silver City, Robinson and the towns and mines of the Tintic Mining District, approximately 45 miles distant.

"Later we completed the triangle by erecting 28 miles of transmission line between Eureka and Mercur. We have further developed our Provo River power by extending our waterways — by flume and tunnel — to the mouth of Provo Canyon and there utilizing the water under 345 head at Olmsted, our newly constructed 9,650 horsepower generator capacity plant."

TRAINING SCHOOL

Rich memories of L. L. Nunn dwell in one of Utah's most picturesque buildings located at the Olmsted Power Plant of Utah Power and Light Co. in Provo Canyon. This is where his fondest

dreams, of economical power and transmission of power, came true. This is where he trained the young men who would take over the infant industry.

A sparkling chapter in Provo's history came with the era of "the Nunn boys." These were young men from Utah County, hand-picked by L. L. Nunn for their adaptability in learning skills of electrical engineers. The boys lived and studied at the Olmsted Plant in the building built of fine materials, also hand-picked by L. L. Nunn.

Telluride Power Co. was sold to Utah Power and Light Company in the summer of 1912. The industry, pioneered by Mr. Nunn, took its place among the most important in Utah.

Utah County/B1-3; A8
Local, Regional/B1-3
Weather/B2
Deaths/B3

Richard D. Hall, city editor, 237-2100

Statewide

Tuesday, February 19, 1991

Utah County

UP&L will spend \$100,000 to clean Olmsted waste site

■ **Environment:** Old pit at mouth of Provo Canyon contains oil from 70 years of vehicle maintenance, firm says.

By Brooke Adams
Deseret News staff writer

PROVO — Utah Power & Light Co. will spend approximately \$100,000 cleaning up a hazardous-waste site at its Olmsted facility at the mouth of Provo Canyon.

The contaminated site was identified in early 1990 following an environmental audit requested by the Bureau of Reclamation as part of taking over the property. UP&L used the site for vehicle maintenance for as long as 70 years and is accepting responsibility for its cleanup, according to Dave Mead, UP&L spokesman.

Mead said the company hasn't used the pit in years and it "wasn't in our consciousness."

Oil from vehicles was drained into a pit behind the

plant. Soil from the pit tested positive for high levels of hydrocarbons and small amounts of benzene, ethylbenzene, toluene and traces of 1,1,1, trichlorethane.

Brad Maulding, environmental health scientist at the Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Waste, classified the level of solvents at the site as "just barely detectable," but said that "if it's detectable it's hazardous." The pit is about the size of a school bus and about 25 feet deep.

Both Maulding and Mead said the contamination has not migrated into the Provo River.

Soil excavated at the site has been placed in 18 covered gondolas and will be disposed of in special, Environmental Protection Agency approved landfills, Maulding said.

The bureau, which was notified about the site in December, has not yet determined the full extent of the cleanup that will be required and has not decided whether UP&L will be fined, he said.

UP&L does not know how long it will take to clean up the site, Mead said.



Contaminated soil is being excavated and put in gondolas for removal to approved landfills.

PHOTOGRAPHY/ STUART W. JOHNSON